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BASS'S ATTEMPT TO PASS THE BLUE MOUNTAINS.

## INCIDENTS OF AUSTRALIAN TRAVEL.

FIRST PAPER.

OUR knowledge of the interior of Australia dates from the foundation of the colony of New South Wales in 1788, for probably before that period no

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European had ever advanced a mile from the beach. The convict settlement which had been established on the borders of Port Jackson was soon strengthened by the arrival of free emigrants, who explored the neighbouring country in search of suitable

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locations. They speedily advanced northward and southward along the coast, and penetrated inland to the base of the Blue mountains. This chain, which runs parallel to the shore, at the distance of from fifty to seventy miles, sometimes approaching much nearer, long formed the back-ground of the colony. Efforts were early and repeatedly made by the authorities, but in vain, to pass it, till at length the obstacle was deemed insurmountable, and the regions excluded from access and view became invested with a kind of mysterious character. The difficulty was not created by the height of the mountains (for the elevations are comparatively moderate), but by a labyrinth of profound ravines, often narrow, with nearly perpendicular sides, running one into another in the most confusing manner, or leading only to precipitous escarpments, perfectly impossible to scale. Military men and engineers were alike foiled. Lieutenant Daws made the first attempt to reconnoitre, in 1789, with a detachment of troops, but was unable to penetrate through the first range of hills; captain Tench, in the following year, met with no better success; colonel Paterson, accustomed to the hardships of African travel, with some Scotch highlanders, was completely baffled in 1793; and Mr. Bass, the bold and successful adventurer by sea, was defeated in the enterprise in 1796, after displays of singular daring. Some frightful precipices were ascended by means of iron hooks fastened to his arms; and deep chasms were passed by being let down into them with ropes. It became a settled conviction that the barrier could never be surmounted, especially as the natives themselves, who had become known to the colonists, were wholly ignorant of any pass. But they highly excited curiosity by wild and fabulous intimations of an immense lake beyond the mountains, with white men on its banks, inhabiting houses like those of the Europeans.

At length, in 1813, the twenty-sixth year of the colony, it was visited by a distressing season of drought. The lands from the sea-coast to the base of the hills were burnt up; the secondary water-courses entirely failed; and the cattle perished in great numbers for want of pasturage. But this temporary evil was the means of effecting an important and permanent benefit. In the emergency, three enterprising individuals—Messrs. Bloxland, Wentworth, and Lanson—combined their efforts to penetrate the highlands, and open the country to the westward for their flocks and herds. By keeping steadily in view what all preceding explorers had overlooked, namely, the parting of the waters flowing eastward to the ocean from those having an opposite direction, or towards the interior, they succeeded in gaining a main ridge; and after a difficult route of more than fifty miles, the travellers came to a terminating point in the mountains, the rugged brow of a precipice, commanding a wide extent of open grassy country outspread before them. A practicable road was soon constructed by convict labour to the pastoral downs, in the midst of which the town of Bathurst was founded, on the banks of a river called the Macquarie, after the governor of that name; and the sources of the Lachlan, more to the south, were discovered.

The first extensive journey into the interior was

made by Mr. Oxley, the surveyor-general, in 1817, with a view to trace the course of the Lachlan. That river was followed through long, tedious windings, till the country became a dead level, and the channel lost its continuity in nearly impassable morasses, the water becoming stagnant and unfit for use. Conceiving that the stream dissipated itself in interior swamps, the idea of further progress was abandoned, though little more than twenty miles would have brought the party to the Morumbidgee river, not then known in any part of its course, which receives the drainage of the Lachlan marshes. Upwards of four hundred miles inland were made upon this occasion; and for five weeks, in traversing the low steppes, not a dry spot was found on which to encamp at the close of the day. Nineteen years afterwards, a traveller in the same route accidentally met with the inscription on a tree, the letters of which were as fresh as if newly cut, "J. Oxley, W. Evans, May 17, 1817." In the following year, the surveyor was despatched to trace the course of the Macquarie, and it was found to enter a similarly level country, over which the river spread itself far and wide. He explored this expanse of shoal water in a boat, amid reeds of such height, that, having at last totally lost sight of land and trees, he was obliged to return to his companions, left encamped on Mount Harris, a detached hill on the banks of the stream. Having thus followed two rivers to their apparent terminations in lagoons, to which neither boundary nor shore could be perceived, the idea of a vast sea or lake occupying the interior of Australia naturally originated. These journeys, made in winter and during the wet season, viewed in connection with subsequent experience, strikingly illustrate some of the physical peculiarities and changes of the region. So heavy are the rains in the mountains, and so rapid and tremendous the consequent rush of water to the lowlands, that the flood advances like a moving cataract, with an elevation of many feet, sweeping everything before it. Oxley was nearly overtaken by one of these inundations, and would have perished but for being providentially at the time within easy distance of a neighbouring hill. Yet at a subsequent date, in summer, when captain Sturt ascended mount Harris, such had been the drought, that the whole country it commanded presented an expanse of dried-up surface. The extensive and apparently interminable lagoon which had been descended in a boat was a large and blasted plain, on which the sun's rays fell with intense heat; and the Macquarie was not in existence at all as a river, being cut up into a succession of water-holes, few and far between!

Soon afterwards, minor excursions made by private individuals illustrated the country southward of the colonized territory; the Morumbidgee was discovered, and the fine tracts of land watered by it, named the Brisbane Downs, which have since proved of such value to the grazier. But in 1824, Messrs. Hovell and Hume, two agriculturists, effected the more important enterprise of finding their way to the stream, since called the Murray, entering beyond it a lightly-timbered district, abundantly clothed with grassy vegetation, and well supplied with streamlets, now included in the colony of Victoria. They finally reached the

northern shore of Bass's Strait, at Port Philip, returning by a different overland route. In 1827, Allan Cunningham travelled in an opposite direction, or to the northward of the existing settlements, opening the undulating pastoral tracts between the river Hunter and Moreton Bay. Captain Sturt, in the following year, made the journey already noticed to the basin of the exhausted Macquarie, and, advancing further into the interior, came to the banks of a new stream, the Darling, five hundred miles from Sydney. The whole country then was in a miserable condition through the drought, and scarcely habitable from the distress of the season. The natives were remarked wandering in the desert, afflicted with cutaneous disorders, owing to the badness of the water which they were obliged to drink; and numbers perished. Birds were noticed sitting motionless upon the trees, apparently gasping for existence, amid the glare of torrid heat. The wild dog was seen prowling about in the day-time, unable from debility to avoid the travelling party; and whilst minor vegetation was altogether burnt up, the very trees were absolutely drooping from the depth to which the drought had penetrated the soil. Several of the adventurers were affected by ophthalmia, produced by the reverberated heat from the plains which they traversed, where the thermometer stood in the shade at 3 P.M. at 122°, and from 98° to 102° Fahrenheit at sunset. In 1830, Sturt descended the Murrumbidgee to the point where its waters merged in a larger stream, the Murray. Pursuing its course, he came to the confluence of the Darling with it, and finally to its own discharge into a great lake, which received the name of Alexandrina, gazing from its southern shore upon the ocean at Encounter Bay. By this descent of a very tortuous channel, in the course of which about two thousand miles were traversed, and great dangers encountered from sand-banks and savages, the indefatigable officer ascertained the discharge of the westerly-flowing waters of the colony, and became entitled to the honour of discovering overland the present province of South Australia.

Three exploring tours conducted by Sir Thomas Mitchell, in 1832-5-6, verified previous observations, accurately determined positions, and brought an extent of new territory within the bounds of knowledge. His second journey was marked by the melancholy fate of Mr. Richard Cunningham, the botanist, who diverged from the party to follow his favourite pursuit, lost his way, fell into the hands of the natives, and was barbarously murdered. The particulars of the death of "a white man, gentleman," were afterwards obtained from the aborigines themselves, who were not actuated by mere ferocity to the deed. On meeting the natives, the hapless wanderer had made signs that he was hungry. They gave him food, and he encamped with them for the night. But the circumstance of his repeatedly getting up during the night, and other actions of an agitated mind, natural to his position, but not understood, roused the suspicions of the blacks, and he became the victim of unfounded alarm. The third journey brought the traveller into the country which he denominated *Australia Felix*, from its sylvan scenery, now the most important part of Victoria, as

its gold-yielding region. The discovery of this province may be said to be due to him, since, though already occupied by some Van Diemen's Land graziers, and visited by agriculturists from New South Wales, these parties sought to keep their knowledge secret, in order to monopolise the fine sheep-walks, whereas Sir Thomas Mitchell at once gave the public the benefit of what he saw. He was the first European acquainted with the famed mount Alexander, the mount Bung of his maps, riding up to the summit with ease, admiring the view, little thinking, however, of the glittering product which lay buried in the neighbouring creeks and gullies. Long patches of open plain, interspersed with forest hills and low woody ranges, formed a pleasing landscape. Troops of kangaroos and flocks of emus occupied the grassy downs, the latter so unconscious of danger as to approach the horses, as if impelled by curiosity. But no signs of human life were then visible in the district destined within twenty years to be studded with encampments, to swarm with gold-diggers, glare with their watch-fires, and resound with the discordant tones of avarice, greediness, revelry, and passion.

In an opposite quarter, or on the western coast, lieutenants Grey and Lushington, in 1837-9, endeavoured to lead a party inland; but the country proved impracticable. A succession of disasters, with the heat of the climate, the want of water, and the hostility of the natives, defeated the expedition; and with difficulty those engaged in it, after the wreck of their boats, found their way along an inhospitable shore to the Swan river. Fatigue and thirst proved fatal to one of the number, and all were reduced to the last stage of exhaustion. Mr. Grey relates, on meeting with a small hole of soft mud:—"I first of all took some of this moist mud in my mouth, but finding a difficulty in swallowing it, as it was so thick, I strained a portion through a handkerchief. We had thirsted, with an intense and burning thirst, for three days and two nights, during the greater portion of which time we had been taking violent exercise under a fierce sun. To conceive the delight of the men when they arrived at this little hole of mud, would be difficult. Each, as he came up and cast his wearied limbs on the ground beside the hole, uttered these words,—*"Thank God!"* and then greedily swallowed a few mouthfuls of the liquid mud, protesting that it was the most delicious water, and had a peculiar flavour which rendered it far superior to any we had ever tasted. But it required some time before their faculties were sufficiently recovered to allow them duly to estimate the magnitude of the danger they had escaped. The small portion of muddy water in the hole was soon finished, and then by scraping it out clean we found that water slowly began to trickle into it again. The men now laid themselves down, almost in a state of stupefaction, and rested by their treasured pool. I felt, however, that great calls upon my energies might still arise, and therefore, retiring a little apart with the native, I first of all returned hearty thanks to my Maker, for the dangers and sufferings he had thus brought me through, and then tottered on with my gun, in search of food." All experience sustains the conclusion that the greater part of Western Australia, with the central region, is unfitted for the abode of civilized man—a dreary wilderness destitute of the

elements of fertility, of which the common features are sand-hills, bare rocks, and tracts of dense scrub, or brushwood. In 1841, Mr. Eyre traversed the sea-board from the western limit of South Australia to King George's Sound, upwards of a thousand miles, enduring through the latter half of the journey the most distressing privations, in which he was attended only by a native boy. The country was found to be generally devoid of timber, being barren table-land densely clothed with scrub, without a river or a river-course for six hundred miles, and fresh water only to be met with after long intervals.

At this period Count Strzchecki, a native of Prussian Poland, alike eminent for science and philanthropy, was diligently exploring in detail New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, a task which involved five years of continued observation, during a tour of seven thousand miles performed on foot. His "Physical Description" of the two countries gives the result of his labours, a work which will long remain a text-book in relation to them. This nobleman, in the year 1840, discovered the district called Gipps' Land, after the governor of that name, now an important section of the Victoria colony, and a region of magnificent prairies. It was then so difficult of access, owing to being walled in by ranges covered with scrub, interwoven with grasses, and encumbered with fallen trees, that the discoverer was obliged to abandon his pack-horses and collections in order to get out of it by the route adopted. It required twenty-six days of hard labour to cut a passage, at the rate of two or three miles a day, during which the party was in imminent danger of perishing by famine and exhaustion.

#### A LECTURER OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

A FEW years ago there died, in good circumstances and at an advanced age, Mr. John Bird, for upwards of thirty years an itinerant lecturer on astronomy. He had in the course of his chequered career professionally visited nearly every town in the United Kingdom. His engagements were always numerous, and he was looked up to by the tribe of itinerant lecturers who followed in his wake as a sort of Coryphæus. He travelled latterly in his own plain, respectable-looking four-wheel chaise, drawn by a useful hack; and on making his periodical appearance in a town, he almost invariably won the respect of the inhabitants, by his mode of propitiating their patronage. His obese, burly figure, encased in unexceptionable broadcloth and kersey-mere; his large, good-humoured face, radiant with smiles; and, in later years, his venerable head and powdered hair, were externals that seldom failed to obtain him a respectful and even friendly reception. He carried his astronomical apparatus in the box of his chaise, and that capacious receptacle was stored with a collection of mysterious mechanism calculated to excite the wonderment of anybody who might happen to look into such a Pandora's box. But the strange materials in question were, in fact, articles connected with the illustration of the science of astronomy. A magic-lantern, an orrery, lots of small oblong boxes containing astronomical slides, a set of tin vessels resembling domestic pipkins, but which were substitutes for

stars and planets,—such were the paraphernalia carried by our travelling lecturer. But however ridiculous or insignificant these curiosities looked, they produced, when set in proper arrangement and action before an audience, an instructive phantasmagoria.

The ordinary lecture upon astronomy would proceed somewhat in the following way. A scant audience has assembled in the school-room of a provincial academy. A plain, roughly-constructed wooden apparatus, intended to illustrate the motion of the earth, stands in obscurity in front of a glazed-calico medium painted all round with the signs of the zodiac, and dimly illuminated from behind by the indispensable magic-lantern. The dark shadow of the lecturer can be seen only by the fitful light thrown on the scene. He discourses on his sublime theme in a thoroughly monotonous and mechanical manner, and elucidates science merely in the elementary way. He is not overburdened with enthusiasm, for, unfortunately, his business is to huckster the stars for daily bread. A sleepy silence prevails among the auditory, broken only by the unmusical voice of the itinerant, and varied by the rattling of the slides through the aforesaid magic-lantern, the uneasy shuffling of feet, the whispering of the school-boys, and the loud and frequent snoring of the village school-master. At last, the lecture is over; the people drowsily go away; the poor astronomer picks up his scattered worlds, tumbles them, together with sundry erratic planets and comets, into a box, and, slinging the latter across his back, trudges away, probably the same night, bound for the next town or village on his route. Such was the routine pursued by our venerable friend for many a year, before lecturing had attained that brilliancy and efficiency which it may be said to have done in our own day.

Mr. Bird was born of humble parents, in a little town in Lincolnshire, towards the close of the last century. When first his strong natural abilities and untutored study of celestial phenomena were discovered, namely, in the year 1814, he was a journeyman carpenter, living with a wife and young family in the town of A—, in Berkshire, to which place he had migrated. A leading tradesman in the place, himself an amateur in science, became the accidental means of eliciting the peculiar genius of Bird and bringing him into notice. This liberal-minded individual discovered in the journeyman carpenter, at work upon a new staircase in his house, a mechanic of a superior order. By self-taught means, Bird had made an astronomical machine, such as a mathematical mind only could accurately construct. It was what is technically named by astronomers a Tellurian. The poor carpenter had lathed his machine into shape simply by the help of an old print on a leaf of Ferguson's Astronomy. When his patron was first shown the model, he was at once struck with its ingenuity, and the more so that an untaught mind should have been able to accomplish what ordinarily could only be done by the help of scientific knowledge. Bird was induced to publicly exhibit his model, and it was pronounced perfect in all respects; the dial-plate proved to be mathematically divided, and to consist of the requisite number of concentric circles, which are



necessary to the explanation of zodiacal position and solar and sidereal time.

The only publicity Bird had hitherto obtained in consequence of his supposed occult inventive powers, came from a party of his brother mechanics, who had surrounded him, at a country roadside inn, and amused themselves by what is called "bringing out" their comrade. Their absurd reception had modified the vanity of the latter, for the workmen no more understood the explanations given of the use of a tellurian, than they did the principle of flying in the air. They merely laughed and joked at their comrade for his folly in setting up as a sort of a magician, as they termed it.

Encouraged by the reception of higher minds, Bird cared little now for the past ignorant opposition. Not satisfied with having made one astronomical instrument, he believed himself capable of still better things, and his whole thoughts were bent on the construction of an orrery. At this idea he worked night and day, assisted by the advice and pecuniary aid of his patron. In the course of a few weeks there came out of his hands a noble and valuable piece of mechanism, designed to give motion to the spheres, in miniature imitation of the eternal principles of celestial phenomena. This was the proposed orrery. At the time there did not exist half-a-dozen such instruments, probably, in the world. But it should be noticed, *en passant*, that the orrery was still deficient in some minor particulars. Although the machinery was complete, the objects which it would have to work were wanting. The planets must be represented by illuminated figures of some kind or other. But how could the effect be produced? The question sorely puzzled the head that had accomplished so much. Bird at last, having exhausted his own ingenuity upon the point, called into requisition that of his patron, and the latter, after due consideration of the difficulty, saw his way out of it, and put Bird's mind at rest by showing him how the planets were to be subjugated to his will. He sent for a tinman. A set of square hollow tubes of tin, perforated at the face, were made. These, illuminated from within by little oil lamps, and fixed on the several arms of the orrery, of course were capable of producing on a calico medium, in the dark, the much desiderated transparencies.

But to come to our hero's *début*. An evening was publicly named for the delivery at the Town Hall of a "lecture on astronomy," (then quite a novelty in the provinces), by a working-man, who would also exhibit some apparatus of his own invention, illustrating the sublime science. In due course the eventful night arrived. Bird, attired in a borrowed suit of sables, made his appearance before the large auditory that had assembled on the occasion. He gave, if not a lecture *par excellence*, at least a clear and practical sort of exposition of the known facts of the science. His language was plain and homely, but nevertheless he was understood and fairly appreciated. The success of the *début* was undoubted, and it determined for the poor carpenter a vocation which he followed through life.

We must now suppose Bird fairly launched in his new profession, and follow him into the midst of its vicissitudes. Amongst his engagements were two that emanated from the universities of

Oxford and Cambridge. Astronomical science was in a backward state at both seats of learning, nearly half a century ago, and the circumstance will account for the selection of a lecturer who did not profess scholarship or classical acquirements. But although our self-educated astronomer had attained neither Greek, Latin, nor the mathematics even, as taught at college, he secured at the universities all the success he could have wished. The collegians attended his lectures, and the "heads of houses" gave him complimentary testimonials, little short of the usual university titles. It is proper here to notice how considerable has been the advance in the study and knowledge of astronomy at the universities, since the above occurrence. The discovery of new planets, the abstruse calculations by which the stellar observations were assisted, and the wondrous secrets of the heavens unveiled to human eyes, have been due to the encouragement of the study of celestial phenomena at Oxford and Cambridge. Mr. Adams and professor Challis are living instances of erudite collegiate students of astronomy. Their discoveries, therefore, brilliantly testify to the close attention that has been given of late years to the above science in the universities. Contrast a report of the Royal Astronomical Society for 1853 with one for 1823, and it will be perceived what advances have been made in this respect.

But to return to our lecturer. He certainly had little learning; his qualifications consisting in reverent admiration for, and enthusiastic ardour in pursuing and illustrating, astronomical truths. Moreover, he possessed an inventive mind, a retentive memory, genuine natural humour, versatility, and readiness. There was, however, a want of refinement in his speech and manner. Still, notwithstanding these drawbacks, in those days his capacities were sufficient to insure him the reputation of a public favourite. His lectures were always extemporaneous; which could not be said of many other lecturers who had started up, and were obliged to acknowledge him as their Mentor. Mr. Bird, in truth, raised a host of imitators, though none of them possessed the originality of his mind.

The relation of one or two anecdotes will serve to show the excellent estimation in which Bird must have been held in his day. He was chosen to be the astronomical preceptor of the marquis of Douro, now duke of Wellington. In the archives of that great family may still exist a document, in itself a curiosity, namely, a poem written by John Bird, lecturer, and teacher of the use of the globes, in tribute to the military greatness of Wellington. While the marquis of Douro was yet a boy, and living at Strathfieldsaye, Bird attended periodically to give instruction to the duke's family. The poem was printed, and respectfully submitted to Bird's youthful pupil. By the latter the poem was duly handed to his illustrious parent; and the author afterwards received a graceful mark of the duke's consideration, in the gift of a pair of valuable globes, bran-new from Cary's shop in St. James-street. Bird was also honoured with the patronage of William the Fourth. He occasionally lectured before the royal family at the Pavilion at Brighton. We remember, indeed, a characteristic story told in reference to Bird's visits to the homes of royalty. He usually in the season of Lent pro-

ceeded from Brighton to Kew, being commanded to attend at the duke of Cumberland's. Upon one occasion, on arriving at Kew palace, Bird, who was remarkably obese and short-winded, was shown into a room and kept waiting some hours, but refreshment was brought in by a powdered lacquey in scarlet livery, and the visitor was left to himself. While heartily partaking of the sumptuous repast and sipping his sherry, all intent upon his entertainment, he felt a sharp slap on the shoulder, and at the same moment heard a youthful voice gleefully exclaiming behind him. The intruder was prince George of Cumberland, now the reigning king of Hanover. The prince, on entering the room accidentally, and recognising his stout preceptor, accosted him with, "Ah! Mr. Bird, is this you? I must take you at once to mamma; for I know that you are expected." Accordingly, as Bird himself would represent it, he was led by the hand of the young prince through a suite of superb rooms, into the presence of the duchess of Cumberland, introduced with the utmost *naïveté*, and soon found himself as much at home in the privacy of Kew palace, as if he had been at his own house.

Such of our readers as have travelled much in England, will have noticed how the lawns of country mansions are frequently furnished with sundials. Many of these were erected under the superintendence of Mr. Bird. His early trade of a carpenter, and peculiar knowledge of science, rendered him the cleverest setter-up of these objects then to be found, and in this peculiar business, which he connected with that of lecturing and teaching, he obtained considerable patronage. His humble but useful career terminated in 1840, and is well calculated to teach a working man how much of self-elevation can be accomplished by the diligent use of natural abilities.

#### PRISON SCENES TWENTY YEARS AGO.

ALL who are conversant with the lives and beneficent labours of a Howard and a Fry, will retain a vivid impression of the appalling state of our prison economy at the time when these philanthropists exposed its revolting secrets to the shuddering world. A reformation of the penal discipline of the country was at once loudly demanded; and legislators, philanthropists, and jurists set themselves to the herculean task of cleansing those pandemoniums of disorder, cruelty, and crime, in which the outcasts of society were collected. It appears, however, that the amelioration thus effected was in numerous instances most superficial and partial; for, according to a sketch of the iniquitous system prevalent in the house of correction at Cold Bath Fields only about twenty years ago, (which has just appeared from the pen of captain Chesterton, the governor of that prison), it would seem that the abuses and corruptions could scarcely have been more flagrant at any former period. This gentleman, whose previous life had been marked by strange vicissitudes and adventures as an officer in the Spanish American wars of the early part of this century, received his appointment in the year 1829, having superseded a governor whom the magistrates were compelled to dismiss in consequence of his glaring mismanagement.

Heretofore, the governorship of the Cold Bath Fields prison, in common with other similar penal establishments, had been in the hands of police officers, who were sometimes guilty of shameful venality, and were often in secret confederacy with the most notorious thieves of the time; so that, through the dearly-bought indulgences extended to them, the prison became a comparatively pleasant retreat, rather than a place of punishment, during the term of their frequent incarceration. Convinced of the impossibility of effecting any thorough measures of reform under such a *régime*, the justices resolved upon a radical change in the management, and accordingly selected a gentleman of the military profession, in the person of captain Chesterton, to discharge these arduous functions.

From the dark picture which he gives of the gross immoralities and abuses of gaol management at the period of his accession to office, we will make a few selections—fully sufficient, however, to excite sentiments of astonishment and disgust in the minds of such of our readers as may favour them with a perusal. "I took possession of the prison," says our autobiographer, "when the whole machinery betokened the most appalling abuse; and I found everything around me stamped with iniquity and corruption. Those best acquainted with the prison were utterly ignorant of the frightful extent of its demoralization. It is, indeed, melancholy to reflect, that well-paid functionaries should have entered into so unhallowed a combination to enrich themselves at the cost of all that was humane or even remotely decent. The procurement of dishonest gains was the only rule; and, with the exception of one or two officers, too recently appointed to have learned the villanous arcanæ of the place, all were engaged in a race of frightful enormity." . . . . .

"It is impossible for the mind to conceive a spectacle more gross and revolting than the internal economy of this polluted spot. From one end of the prison to the other, a vast illicit commerce prevailed, at a rate of profit so exorbitant as none but the most elastic consciences could have devised and sustained. The law forbade every species of indulgence, and yet there was not one that was not easily purchasable. The first question asked of a prisoner was, 'had he money, or any thing convertible into money; or would any friend, if written to, advance him money;' and if the answer were affirmative, then the game of spoliation commenced. In some instances, as much as seven or eight shillings in the pound went to the 'turnkey,' with a couple of shillings to the 'yardsman'—a prisoner who had purchased his appointment from the turnkey, at a cost of never less than five pounds, and frequently more. A fellow called 'the passage-man' would put in a claim for something also, and thus the prison novice would soon discover that he was in a place where fees were exorbitant and charges multiplied. If he should be singularly untutored in the habits of such society, he would not long retain a vestige of his property; and, if a sense of injustice led him to complain, he was called 'a nose,' and had to run the gauntlet of the whole yard, by passing through a double file of scoundrels, who, facing inwards, assailed him with short ropes or well-knotted handkerchiefs. If

however, he were a swell-mobsmen, or one who promptly assimilated himself to the ways of nefarious society, he would, by a sub-current of traffic (paying tribute to the turnkey), amass in a few months an unusual per-centage upon the money invested. The poor and friendless prisoner was a wretchedly oppressed man. He was kicked and buffeted, made to do any revolting work, dared not complain, and such was the amount of savage usage, combined with starvation (for even his prison fare would sometimes be sacrificed to fraud or theft), that timely intervention only saved a few despairing wretches from suicide."

It may well excite the surprise of the reflecting reader, how these scandalous proceedings could altogether escape the notice and knowledge of the magistrates, in their periodical or casual visits to the prison. It appears, however, that ample provision was made for any such contingencies, by the establishment of a system of preconcerted signals; so that the unexpected visitor, on advancing from one part of the establishment to another, would usually find an outward order, well calculated to lull all suspicions of the irregularities that existed beneath the surface. The doors of cells opening into eight yards might be thrown wide open, to exhibit clean basements garnished with lime white, and little would the complacent justice imagine that almost every cell was hollowed out to constitute a hidden store, where tobacco and pipes, tea and coffee, butter and cheese reposed, safe from inquisitive observation; frequently beside bottles of wine and spirits, fish sauce, and various strange luxuries. As soon as evening arrived, when all apprehension of official intrusion was dismissed, the orgies of the depraved inmates commenced, during which, amid smoking, drinking, and singing, recitals of villanous exploits, and every species of polluting conversation took place unchecked. Thus, any individuals of comparatively undefiled minds, coming within their demoralizing influence, would find it almost impossible to escape contamination.

So thick was the veil of artifice and secrecy thrown over these prison irregularities, that even the new governor himself could only slowly and stealthily penetrate the mystery of wickedness working everywhere around him; while the subordinate functionaries, instead of aiding him in his investigations, did their utmost to delude and resist him in his reformatory schemes. Thus, for a long period, he had to contend single-handed against a host of confederates bent upon the maintenance of their illicit privileges. One method to which he was compelled to have recourse in order to obtain information, was to glide softly through the passages in the evening, and listen to the private conversations of the prisoners, who generally slept together by threes in each cell. On one of these eaves-dropping expeditions, the governor found a young man, of really honest principles, contending with two hardened criminals for the superior advantages of integrity. He was in prison for theft, but protested that had it not been for the impoverishment and distress occasioned by a severe illness, he would never have stolen. His companions scoffed, of course, at his scruples, and advocated general spoliation; when, in a tone of indignant remonstrance, the young man said, "Surely you would not rob a poor countryman who

might arrive in town with merely a few shillings in his pocket!" One of the wretches, turning lazily in his crib, and yawning as he did so, exclaimed with an oath, "I'd rob my own father if I could get a shilling by him!"—a sentiment that was loudly cheered by his fellow vagabond. The discussion thus overheard awakened in the governor's mind a deep interest on behalf of the brave young champion for probity. On inquiry, it was found that he was a manufacturer and hawker of brooms and brushes; and, ascertaining that 15s. on his discharge would enable him to buy sufficient materials again to pursue his trade, the visiting justices kindly presented him with that sum. A few months afterwards, captain Chesterton met him in Hatton Garden, bearing a pole well stocked with brooms and brushes, and, with grateful expressions to his friend, he declared himself to be a thriving and contented man.

Though long checkmated and defeated in his excellent designs, by the powerful combination arrayed against him, an unexpected ally at length appeared, in the person of a prisoner bearing the assumed name of Thompson. This individual had been an officer in the Indian army, and had reduced himself to beggary by gaming and intoxication. In this abject plight, however, he still retained many traces of the gentleman, and was, moreover, devotedly attached to his aged mother. It was indeed a letter of his, addressed to his parent, breathing the most beautiful and affectionate sentiments, that, coming beneath the governor's eye, first excited his sympathy for the fallen man. Finding, by frequent intercourse with him, that he was worthy of confidence, the perplexed governor intrusted to him the anxious desire he felt to reform the prison management. His zealous co-operation was promptly secured, and a multitude of important facts were communicated, which aided him materially in the formation and working of his plans. At the suggestion of his new coadjutor, the governor paid occasional visits to the homes of prisoners, where, by tact and kindness, he obtained much information relative to the large pecuniary bribes which on various pretexts were extorted from their distressed relatives by the turnkeys. "One poor woman," says our author, "assured me that she had parted with her last farthing, and pawned her last remnant of clothing, to satisfy these insatiate wretches; and in the agony of her reflections she exclaimed wildly, 'Oh! what monsters those men are! what hearts of stone they possess!'" Such a state of vicious society as this seems indeed to foreshadow in some measure the condition of lost spirits, and makes one realize the meaning of the aspiration, "Oh, gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men."

The dishonest turnkeys were dismissed; and this summary measure struck consternation and alarm into the heart of the clique, and at the same time exposed Thompson, whose concert with the governor had been long suspected, to their hatred and vengeance. Indeed, not many days were suffered to elapse before a fierce assault was made upon him. "One evening," says our narrator, "loud cries were heard from a room containing about thirty prisoners. I was in the garden and heard them, and rushed with two or three officers, whom I summoned to my aid, in order to ascertain the cause.



No sooner was the door opened, than there stood Thompson, dripping with perspiration, and shaking with terror. Missiles of various kinds had been hurled at him, and he felt alarmed for his life. Preconcert was manifest in this outrage; for each assailant, as he suddenly started up and threw, instantly laid down, and no one of the offenders could be recognised. I never saw a creature so completely overcome by alarm as Thompson, who was withdrawn from the room more dead than alive." To provide for his safety, he was removed to another part of the building, where he remained during the residue of his prison residence. After his departure, the opposition and revenge of both officers and prisoners were concentrated against the governor himself, who was continually receiving anonymous letters, full of vindictive threats and menaces. Every epithet was applied to him that rage and malice could suggest; but, undeterred by the perils that gathered around his path, he steadily and resolutely pursued his schemes of amelioration, though, in deference to the wish of one of the turnkeys, who warned him that his life was in hourly jeopardy, he walked about with loaded pistols in his pocket, and slept with the same weapons beside him at night; thus for some months rendering his existence one of painful solicitude. He, however, with a spirit of true heroism, determined to reform the prison or perish in the attempt. It is gratifying to know that he was most effectively encouraged and supported in this noble undertaking by the visiting committee. On the resignation, about this time, of the chief warden, the hands of the governor were much strengthened by the appointment of sergeant Sims to the vacant post, who proved a valuable coadjutor.

To give an idea of the exactions, tyrannical bearing, and insolence of some of the "yardmen," we transfer to our columns a picture of one man belonging to this odious class. "Of all the domineering functionaries of that school, a fellow named B— was the most conspicuous. He was a clever, plausible man, who could lie with imperturbable serenity, and demur and contend, whenever assailed, with a cool impudence and well-feigned assumption of innocence that few could imitate. He was one of those semi-educated braves with whom no single-minded novice could compete. He disputed with me every step, inch by inch, swore by emphatic oaths that he would pose a jurist, and ultimately (as his time drew short), menaced me with prospective law in every form. Nothing could exceed the arbitrary sway which he exercised over the inmates of his yard, and with such provoking success, that I essayed in vain to shake his influence amongst the prisoners. He had been tried and sentenced in the court of King's Bench, and craftily assumed a dignity, based upon the superior tribunal that had condemned him (of which he boasted incessantly); and, in spite of my efforts, he all but triumphed over me by an assumption of superiority and importance which really imposed upon the ignorant by whom he was surrounded. At length he was discharged, and departed for the west of England, whence he played me off a trick which was truly characteristic of the man. I one day received a heavy box from Falmouth, marked "game," for which I paid as "carriage" 4s. 6d. I was astonished at its weight, but opened it care-

fully, in the presence of my wife, and found it to contain stones wrapped in hay, together with half a dozen dead chaffinches, and a note in the well-known writing of my late tormentor, hoping I 'should enjoy the roast.'"

At the period when captain Chesterton entered upon his official station, it was a custom for philanthropic individuals to supply decent clothing to the naked and distressed on their discharge from prison. This practice, originating in kindly and Christian feelings, was soon fearfully abused by the *habitues* of the prison, who almost invariably pawned the garments thus bountifully furnished, and squandered the proceeds. Indeed it operated as a direct encouragement to the perpetration of petty offences, for the sake of the retiring gifts bestowed by the hands of misplaced charity. This indiscriminate practice was abolished by the governor, the effect of which was immediately seen in the diminution of petty and wanton trespasses.

Among other instances of the gross fraud and malversation that had infected the entire establishment at Cold Bath Fields, was the waste, destruction, and misappropriation of the prison clothing and bedding. There had been, in fact, an utter want of discipline and responsible oversight in this matter, so that the annual sacrifice of property was enormous. The economical measures gradually introduced, under captain Chesterton's management, displayed an almost incredible saving, as a comparative table of two periods of seven years satisfactorily testify.

Before a year had elapsed, much had been done towards purging the prison of its delinquent characters and organized corruptions. The governor now found leisure to turn his thoughtful attention to other progressive improvements. Foremost among these, was the extinction of the mischievous habit of unrestricted intercourse between the prisoners. In imitation of the American model, which had already been copied at Wakefield with great success, the "associated silent system" was introduced. This great change in prison discipline came into operation on the 29th of December, 1834, on which day 914 prisoners were suddenly apprised that all intercommunication by word, gesture, or sign, was prohibited; and without any approach to overt opposition, the silent system became the rule of the prison, as it since has of several others. The results of this mode, after a trial of eighteen years, are declared by captain Chesterton to be eminently satisfactory.

We could have wished in this article to have made some reference to another work on prisons, entitled, "Chapters on Prisons and Prisoners," by the Rev. Mr. Kingsmill, chaplain to the Penitentiary, Pentonville. This volume ought to be in the hands of all who take an interest in the prevention of crime in our country; but its merits are too great to dispose of thus summarily in a concluding paragraph. At a future day we hope to bring the work fully before our readers.

HOW TO LIVE AT PEACE.—1. Mind your own business. 2. Keep your tongue from evil. 3. Do not contend for trifles. 4. If others neglect their duty to you, be sure you perform yours to them. 5. Make your enemy see your love to him. 6. Beg of God for universal charity. 7. Cultivate humility of mind.



## SISTER MARTHA.

ADAPTED AND ABRIDGED FROM THE FRENCH.

"REMEMBER that if the hundred crowns arrears of rent on your farm are not paid before to-morrow evening, you must turn out; I have a solvent tenant ready to take possession." So saying, a stern-looking man, dressed in brown, walked quickly out of a cottage in the pretty village of Thoraïse, near Besançon.

"Oh, sir!" said a woman, following him and clasping her hands, "have pity on my poor husband, who has been ill all the summer, and who is still——"

"I should have no objection, madame Biget," said the steward; "but it does not rest with me. My lord is now absent, but he will be here to-day or to-morrow; my accounts must be all squared and ready for his inspection. I am not going to lose my situation for your convenience, madame Biget, so you must manage the best way you can."

"Ah me!" exclaimed the poor woman, raising her eyes appealingly towards heaven; "I have no hope then left me from man."

Re-entering the cottage, she opened a cupboard and took out a piece of brown bread. "Martha," she said, addressing a child of ten years old, "there is your breakfast, my child; I have neither milk nor butter to give you to-day."

"Oh, mamma! that does not signify; but why do you look so sad?"

"Don't ask me, child, but make haste to eat your bread. Your aunt at Besançon has sent you and your brothers and sisters a nice cake a-piece; I wish you to take them theirs to school."

"Oh, thank you, mamma; and if you will allow me, I will go at once, and keep my cake and my bread to eat with them when we are all together."

Her mother gave her leave; and Martha, with her little basket on her arm, was soon tripping gaily along the road.

It was a fine morning in October, 1757, and as little Martha went on her way, she saw a vast cloud of dust advancing. Presently a large party of dragoons appeared, followed by a number of men on foot, dressed in uniform, but unarmed. The child stopped on the road close to the hedge, and, as the party passed by her, she heard a low sigh, and saw that one of the prisoners of war, for such they were, had fallen on the ground. He looked as pale as death and his eyes were closed. Martha bent over him, and said, "What is the matter, poor man?"

The fainting soldier did not answer, but one of his comrades, who knew a little French, replied, "He's dying of hunger, like the rest of us, little girl."

"Dying of hunger!" repeated she. And her first impulse was to open her basket and give its contents to the prisoner; but a sudden thought checked her. "These cakes don't belong to me," she said to herself. However, she took her own cake and her piece of bread and gave them to the poor man, who was now somewhat revived, and began to devour the food with the utmost eagerness. At the same moment several other prisoners held out their supplicating hands: they looked so pale and thin and wretched, that the child's eyes filled with tears.

"Oh!" she thought, "if my brothers and sisters were here, I am certain they would not grudge their cakes to those poor people. I'm afraid mamma won't be pleased; but then hunger is such a dreadful thing, I *must* give them." So the little girl, who had not herself tasted anything that day, divided her little store, as far as it would go, amongst the prisoners.

"I have no more," she said at last, in so sad a tone that the French captain who commanded the detachment, and who had been silently watching her, approached.

"A pretty business this," he said, affecting a severe tone, "to give your breakfast to your enemies!"

"Enemies, sir!" exclaimed Martha, "they are poor hungry people."

"Yes, but they are English; and the English are the enemies of France."

"Sir, I never thought whether they were enemies or not when I saw them suffering."

The officer took her little hand. "Have you eaten your own breakfast, my child?"

"No, sir."

"Then you must be very hungry?"

"Oh, I don't much mind; I'm used to it."

"Does your mother allow you to want food?"

"Oh, no, sir, my mother always gives us children our meals before she takes a bit herself. When I am hungry, it is not her fault, but mine for giving my bread away."

At that moment, an inferior officer approached the captain to ask for orders, and Martha went away, retracing her steps towards home; for, not having anything to carry to her brothers and sisters, it would have been useless to visit them at school. "What will my mother say?" she thought. "I will tell her the exact truth, and then I hope she will not be angry."

When Martha entered the usually neat cottage, she was surprised to see the furniture in disorder, and her father, who during the last six months had never quitted his bed, seated, pale and faint, in an arm-chair. Her mother was counting some money in her lap, pausing now and then to brush away the tears that filled her eyes.

"Oh, mamma, what is the matter?"

"We are ruined," replied her mother, "and will have in future to beg our bread."

The child threw her arms round the poor woman's neck, and exclaimed, "Oh, no, mamma, I'll work for you!"

"Poor child!" said madame Biget, sorrowfully, looking at her daughter's slight, delicate frame.

"But, mamma, how has all this happened?"

"We owe my lord de Varenne one hundred crowns for rent; all that we possess would not pay it, and his steward told us this morning that we must give up the farm."

"Instead of talking to that child, Catherine," said her husband, peevishly, "you ought to cook the dinner."

"The dinner is both cooked and eaten, dear," said his wife, gently; "did not I give you your soup just now?"

"But your dinner and the children's?"

"Ah, they had some nice cakes which my sister sent them; and as for me, my heart is too full to eat."

Poor little Martha turned so pale, and trembled so visibly, that her father remarked it, and said, "I'll answer for it, she has, as usual, given her breakfast away to some poor person."

"Mamma—papa—don't be angry," said the child, bursting into tears; "but I met some poor prisoners on the road; they seemed to be dying of hunger, and you know that God commands us to feed the hungry, so I could not help giving them all the cakes."

"Naughty child!" cried her mother, angry at the thought of what her children might suffer; "how dared you give away all that you had?"

"God feeds the little birds, mother, and He will not let us want," said Martha, in a tone of such gentle persuasion, that madame Biget was quite softened, and said: "Well, well, I have enough for ye all to-day." And, giving the child a bowl of vegetable soup, thickened with barley, she laid by equal portions for the others. As Martha was eating hers, she remarked that her mother had kept none for herself, and accordingly said: "Mamma, you don't eat."

"I can't, child."

"Mamma," said Martha, after a pause, "will you permit me to go out for two hours?"

"Whither do you want to go?"

"Please don't ask me until I return."

"Let her go if she wishes it," said her father; "I dare say there are some poor sick persons she wants to visit. Kiss me, Martha; you are a kind child, and God will bless you."

"Good morning, dame Simonne," said Martha, as she approached a cottage door where an old woman was sitting.

"And good morning to you, Martha Biget; you look tired, little one. Come in and rest yourself. Have you far to go?"

"To the castle, dame."

"Ah, you want to see the bonfires that are to be lighted in honour of my lord's return."

"Then he is arrived?" said the child, clapping her hands; "I am so glad, for I want to speak to him."

The old woman burst out laughing. "It won't be very easy for a poor child like you to get speech of him to-day."

"What shall I do?" said Martha, despondingly.

"Is your business very pressing?"

"Oh, indeed it is, dame. But who are these two children coming towards us? how beautifully they are dressed!"

"They are my foster-children, Martha—the son and daughter of lord de Varenne. The moment they return from town, they run to see their old nurse. Darlings!" she exclaimed, extending her arms to receive a boy of ten and a girl of about a year older.

"Have you made a hot cake for us, nurse?" asked the little boy, throwing his arms round her neck.

"Look at the beautiful scarf that papa has given me," said the girl, spreading out on dame Simonne's knees a silken scarf, splendidly embroidered with silver and seed-pearls. "Is it not lovely? Papa says it cost a hundred crowns."

Martha, who had hid herself bashfully behind nurse's chair, ventured to glance at the scarf.

"A hundred crowns!" thought she; "just

what my father owes." And she thought sadly how happy the sum which that piece of useless finery had cost would have made her parents.

"How melancholy that little girl looks!" said the young lady, remarking Martha's presence for the first time.

"She wants very much to speak to your father, Mademoiselle Marie," said her nurse.

"To papa? That won't be difficult. He is quite near, for he walked hither with us. Papa! papa! Cyprien, do you call, for your voice is stronger than mine—papa!" she continued, addressing an officer, who advanced, talking to an elderly man, dressed in brown, "here is a little girl who wants to speak to you." And taking Martha kindly by the hand, Marie presented her to her father.

Poor Martha! she had arranged a little speech in her head, which was to have commenced with, "My lord, have pity on us!" But when she found herself standing before him, she blushed and trembled, and could not utter a single word.

Meantime, lord de Varenne looked at her closely, and exclaimed: "'Tis the little damsel of the cakes! What do you wish me to do for you, dear child?" he asked, smiling kindly. "Do you want some more cakes to give to the prisoners?"

"Ah, no, my lord! It was something quite different—"

"Well, my child, speak, don't be afraid. I saw you this morning perform an action, which I would give the best farm in my possession to have seen done by Marie. I looked for you afterwards, but you were gone. Come, hold up your head and speak freely. If what you want be in my power to bestow, I promise now not to refuse it to her who this morning went without her breakfast to feed the hungry prisoners."

At these kind words Martha fell on her knees, and clasping her hands, exclaimed: "Oh, my father and my mother! you will be saved! My lord," she continued, "my father owes you a hundred crowns—he cannot pay it, on account of the hail, and the rain, and —"

"Stuff and nonsense!" interrupted the man in brown. "My lord, if you listen to all that your tenants choose to tell you, you will find that the hail, or the rain, or the sun, will always prevent them paying their rent."

"Silence! M. Dubois," said his master, sternly.

"If this little girl assures me that her father cannot pay, I fully believe her. The parents who have brought her up, must be worthy people. Stand up, my child; go home, and tell your father and mother not to be uneasy. I will go to see them to-morrow. Meantime, here is something to replenish your basket of cakes." And lord de Varenne put into Martha's trembling hands a purse nearly filled with silver.

The child felt as if she were dreaming. "Is it mine—all mine?" she said. And her friend having assured her that it was, she scarcely waited to thank and bless him, but darted off homewards at full speed. Out of breath, she rushed into the cottage, threw the purse into her mother's lap, and exclaiming: "Take this; my lord will come himself to-morrow!"—fell nearly fainting on the ground. She soon, however, recovered; and in

her parents' thanks and blessings found a sweet recompense for her conduct.

Such is one of the anecdotes which a French writer has related of the early life of Martha Biget, whose subsequent career of benevolence corresponds with the promise of her childhood. During the bloody scenes of the French Revolution, she lived at Besançon, and her house was a place of refuge for old or sick people and children. She lived on brown bread and milk, in order to have more to give away. On the 23rd of March, 1805, a fire broke out in a small village near Besançon. Sister Martha (as she was commonly called) hastened to the spot, and did what she could to bring aid to the sufferers. A cottage, inhabited by a woman and two orphan children of whom she had charge, burned so rapidly, that despite of Martha's tears and entreaties, no one would venture to enter it. She offered everything she possessed as a bribe, but in vain. At length, feeble woman as she was, she rushed herself into the burning ruin, and, aided no doubt by the Divine assistance on which she relied, succeeded in rescuing the three helpless inmates. On another occasion, in 1807, while occupied in gathering medicinal herbs on the bank of the river Doubs, she heard a loud splash near her: it was a child of nine years old, the son of a poor shepherd, who had fallen into the water. Martha, without knowing how to swim, jumped in after him, and succeeded in rescuing the drowning child. Prisoners of war always excited her most active sympathy. There was at Besançon a sort of *dépôt* of sick and wounded prisoners, belonging to almost every country in Europe. Martha worked for them, begged for them, and nursed them in their illness. Many a stout fellow was, through her kind offices, restored to the friends who wept for him on the banks of the Tagus, the Oder, or the Volga.

During the years 1813 and 1814, France was desolated by the horrors of war. Sister Martha braved all the dangers of the battle-field, to carry succour to the wounded, whether friends or enemies. She has been seen to approach them under the very mouth of the cannon, and after the bloodiest actions were ended, her place was in the field-hospitals. On one occasion, in 1814, the duke of Reggio met her, and said: "I have long been familiar with your name, madame; for whenever my soldiers are wounded, their first cry always is, 'Where is our sister Martha?'"

Shortly after this period she received what, to a disposition like hers, was the sweetest reward: she succeeded in obtaining the pardon of a poor conscript who had deserted, and who had been led out to be shot. Sister Martha, however, was not left without worldly honours. In 1801, the Agricultural Society of Besançon presented her with a silver medal, on which was inscribed, *Homage to virtue*. In 1815, the war minister sent her the decoration of a cross; and the same year the emperor of Russia sent her a gold medal. The king of Prussia caused one of his ministers, prince Hardenberg, to write her a letter of thanks for the care she had bestowed on the sick and wounded Prussian prisoners, and the letter was accompanied by an offering of one hundred pieces of gold. The emperor of Austria and the king of Spain sent her decorations. On his restoration to his throne,

Louis XVIII desired to see her, and gave her a most gracious reception.

The famine of 1817 exhausted all the treasury of presents which sister Martha had received. She found means, however, to distribute gratuitously to the poor, two thousand portions of soup every day. When the return of abundance put an end to the sufferings of the people, and when war had given place to peace, sister Martha retired to end her days in peaceful obscurity, and died on the 29th of March, 1824, aged seventy-six years.

How sweet it is to contemplate a career of benevolence in contrast with a life of selfishness. Especially delightful is it to do so when kindness flows from Christian principle, and is the fruit of love to God, the only motive which can be regarded with favour by the great Searcher of hearts.

## THE LATE CENSUS.

### II.—FAMILIES AND HOUSES.

THE number of the male population, found and distinguished on the morning of March 31, 1851, was 10,386,048, and of the female 10,735,919: the women and girls thus exceeding the men and boys by 349,871. But as a number of the men were abroad with the army, or at sea, the females at home in Great Britain were in excess of the males by 512,361. This disparity in the proportion of the sexes at home was the greatest in Scotland—110 females to 100 males; the least in England and Wales—104 females to 100 males. Fifty years ago, when the first regular enumeration of the people was taken, the proportion of the sexes was nearly the same. Thus, in 1801, there were 103,353 females to every 100,000 males, and in 1851, there were 103,369 females to the same number of the other sex.

The inhabitants of Great Britain were returned in 1801, with tolerable exactness, at 10,917,433; and consequently the return for 1851, of 21,121,967, shows that since the commencement of the present century, or after the lapse of fifty years, the nation has grown numerically stronger, nearly in the proportion of two to one. The Irish have entered the country in great numbers in the interval, settling in the metropolis, the sea-ports, and the manufacturing towns; but at the same time, a more considerable number of the purely British race have poured out of it, as emigrants to different parts of the world. During the five decennial periods, the average annual increase was about 147,518; 197,852; 216,150; 224,473; and 235,200. The annual rate of increase was the greatest in the interval from 1811 to 1821. Since that period, though the population has vastly augmented, the rate of increase has declined, owing to emigration, and the epidemics which have affected the public health, as influenza, cholera, and other diseases. Supposing the rate at which the people have multiplied through the five decennaries to continue uniform, there will be at the lapse of another half century, or in the year 1901, nearly forty-two millions of persons within our borders.

According to the English life-table, half a generation of men of all ages passes away in thirty years, and more than three in every four of their number die in half a century. It is hence inferred,



taking emigration into account, with all other movements of the population, that of the twenty-one millions now in Great Britain, not more than two millions and a half were in the country in 1801. Supposing the present rates of mortality not to be accelerated, about ten millions and a half will survive the year 1881; between four and five millions will live out the century, or reach the year 1901; and some of the infants of the passing hour will linger to the year 1951, as the worn and shattered fragments of the existing generation, few and far between.

Passing from individuals to their aggregation in communities, the first grouping which claims attention as the most important and intimate, is that of the Family, a social unit in the constitution of parishes, towns, counties, and the nation. Considerable difficulty has been felt in defining a family. Though generally composed of parents or parent, children and servants, yet it may consist only of an unmarried man and domestics, or of a single woman dwelling alone in a cottage. In taking the census, occupiers were regarded as representing heads of families, that is, all resident owners who held the whole or any separate portion of a house, so as to be responsible for the rent, whether tenants or lodgers. The number of such families in England and Wales was 3,712,290, and in Scotland 600,098, making a total of 4,312,388. Comparing this return with the one at the commencement of the century, the result is, that since that period upwards of one million eight hundred thousand new lines of families have been established in the country south of the Tweed, and two hundred and thirty-six thousand on the north, notwithstanding the known proneness of the Scotch to migrate southerly.

The inhabited houses amounted to 3,648,347 for the whole of Great Britain, and were occupied in the proportion of 5706 persons, in 1182 families, to 1000 dwellings. Though we have numerous instances of overcrowding in our cities and towns, yet this evil has sensibly declined in England; and the rule is general, for each family to have a separate tenement, the sanctuary of its joys, sorrows, musings, and affections, secure from the intrusion of vulgar curiosity and mischievous intermeddling. This is a social condition, not more favourable to personal comfort and health, than conservative of domestic virtue, independence, and dignity of character. Dr. C. G. Carus, physician to the king of Saxony, who visited this country in 1844, in attendance upon his sovereign, has a passage upon the subject, in an account of the tour, which is quoted in the report of the census. Though an instance of hasty generalisation, it is interesting, and substantially true. Speaking of the separate character of English dwelling-houses, in opposition to the continental system, of families occupying different floors of the same building, he remarks upon the habit, as giving "the Englishman that proud feeling of personal independence, which is stereotyped in the phrase, 'Every man's house is his castle.' This is a feeling which cannot be entertained, and an expression which cannot be used, in Germany or in France, where ten or fifteen families often live together in the same large house. The expression, however, receives a true value, when, by the mere closing of the house-door,

the family is able, to a certain extent, to cut itself off from all communication with the outward world, even in the midst of great cities. In English towns or villages, therefore, one always meets with small detached houses merely suited to one family, or apparently large buildings extended to the length of half a street, sometimes adorned like palaces on the exterior, but separated by partition walls internally, and thus divided into a number of small high houses, for the most part three windows broad, within which, and on the various stories, the rooms are divided according to the wants or convenience of the family; in short, therefore, it may be properly said, that the English divide their edifices perpendicularly into houses—while we Germans divide them horizontally into floors. In England, every man is master of his hall, stairs, and chambers; whilst we are obliged to use the two first in common with others, and are scarcely able to secure ourselves the privacy of our own chamber, if we are not fortunate enough to be able to obtain a secure and convenient house for ourselves alone."

In Paris there are twenty-two persons to a house, while in London the proportion does not amount to eight. It is greater in Plymouth, where there are ten persons to a house, but no other town in England, and only some districts in the metropolis, exhibit such proportions. Liverpool has eight persons to a house; Greenwich, Bristol, and Bath seven; Manchester, Bolton, Brighton, Southampton, and Dover, six; Birmingham, Sheffield, Nottingham, Derby, Reading, and most of the other towns have five.

A very different arrangement of persons and dwellings prevails in Scotland, where the continental style of building is adopted, and large houses are divided horizontally into "flats" which are let to different families. Thus in Perth there are twelve persons to a house; in Aberdeen rather more; in Dundee fifteen; in Edinburgh twenty; and in Glasgow twenty-seven. But it is principally in the southern burghs of Scotland that this grouping of a number of families in flats under the same roof prevails. It is also found to some extent in the towns of the two northern counties of England. The practice of raising huge blocks of building in these districts, accommodating several households, like the *insula* of ancient Rome, was perhaps adopted in the first instance as a measure of security, in those troubled times when war was frequent between the Scotch and English, and has been perpetuated after the occasion has passed away. But it is desirable that the practice should be superseded, for domestic comfort and propriety will be best secured by each family being in possession of an entire house, having the sole command of the threshold, and of the whole space between the ground and the sky.

Besides the vast majority of the population resident in houses, there was a fraction temporarily located in public buildings, as barracks, prisons, workhouses, lunatic asylums, hospitals, and other similar institutions. The barracks amounted to 174 with 53,933 soldiers and officers; the prisons numbered 257, with 30,959 inmates of all descriptions; the workhouses were 746 with 131,582 occupiers of all kinds; the lunatic asylums were 149 with 21,004 persons; the hospitals for the sick were 118 with 11,647 persons; and other asylums,

orphan and charity schools, amounting to 573, contained 46,731 inmates. The aggregate is 2017 public edifices in Great Britain, with 295,856 persons.

The occupiers of barges and vessels employed in the inland navigation, who slept on board their craft on the night of March 30th, and of sea-going vessels in port, amounted to 64,672.

In addition, the houseless class, comprising gipsies, beggars, strollers, vagabonds, vagrants and outcasts of various descriptions, with some honest and unfortunate people, numbered 18,249, of whom 9972 slept in barns, and 8277 in tents in the open air. But it was obviously impossible to enumerate accurately unsettled individuals, and the return may be regarded as below the actual number.

### IMITATORS.

THERE was a fisherman, or rather a fish-hawker, at my outer door just now; and as I sat at my desk I could hear him in earnest conversation with my housekeeper respecting a shilling's-worth of mackerel. Between them they distracted my attention from the paper then before me; but it will be hard if I have not profited by the scraps of worldly wisdom which fell from their lips. Let us see.

The man was anxious to sell his fish—that was evident. It was not so evident that we, that is, my housekeeper, speaking for herself and sundries, cared to have fish for dinner.

"How am I to know they are fresh?" says the housekeeper.

"Look at the gills, ma'am," says the fish-man; "they'll tell you. They were caught last night, and a'most alive when I put them in the basket. I wouldn't tell you a story."

"I don't think we want fish to-day," said the housekeeper, doubtfully, but indifferently.

"I've just sold two shillings-worth at the clergyman's," replied the man, in a tone that plainly said, "There! you can't possibly help buying after *that*." It had its effect too.

"Well, what is the price?"

"Six a shilling: beautiful full roes; look, ma'am."

"They were offered eight for a shilling last week."

"Yes, ma'am; I sold nine for a shilling last week; but that isn't this, you see, ma'am. I assure you the housekeeper at the clergyman's bought them, just now, six a shilling, without saying a word."

"We shall have fish for dinner," thinks I;—and so we shall. That's settled. And not more than six on the dish either. That's settled too. Our fisherman has studied human nature; at least, he knows how to use an effective argument. And we shall have fish on our table to-day, because there will be fish on the dinner-table at the rectory; that is, supposing our fish-man to be honest and true.

The world abounds in *imitators*. Everywhere, and at all times, we see that one will do what another has done, because that other has done it, and for no other reason. I take up the paper which the postman has just brought, and, turning

to the advertising columns, my eye catches a list of subscriptions to the Indisputable Benevolent Society. The first name on the list is Mr. A., who gives fifty pounds; the second is Mr. B.; he also gives fifty pounds; and Mr. C. does the same. Now there is a moral certainty that if Mr. A. had contented himself with giving twenty-five pounds, the Indisputable Benevolent Society would have lost two other twenty-fives in the diminished subscriptions of Messrs. B. and C.

A short time since, a young and ardent friend of ours undertook to obtain donations to a certain amount to defray the expenses of a Sunday-school. It was some time before she could get a name to begin with; but, once started, she got on famously. "It is all very good—yes, yes, an excellent object," said Mr. S.; "but—what does Mr. T. say to it? How much has Mr. U. given? I don't see any names on your card; what do you come to me first for?" We may at once set Mr. S. down as an imitator.

A few days ago we called on our friend Frank K. He sat shivering in his study, with his hands benumbed and blue with cold, and a handsome chimney-board before his grate.

"Dreadful cold," he said, "for June; more like January."

"Very true. Why don't you take a run, and warm yourself?"

"I can't, you see. I must stick to work to-day, I have so much to do: though I can scarcely hold my pen."

"Then why, in the name of common sense, don't you light your fire?"

"Why, it would look so. A fire in June!"

"But you say it is as cold as January."

"And so it is. But then, you see, nobody sits by a fire this time of year."

"Yes, somebody does," said I. "For instance, I put a light to my fire this morning before I sat down to write."

"You did?" exclaimed Frank, joyously, and with sudden alacrity springing from his seat; "then I will too." And no sooner said than done.

It would be very easy to multiply illustrations which would go to prove that the world is made up of *leaders* and *followers*, and that there are more followers than leaders. Go to a public meeting, for another instance, and you will find, in nine cases out of ten, where a speaker is "loudly applauded," that the applause begins with a solitary cheer, and gradually rises to a climax as one imitator after another chimes in with the chorus of claps. But for the adventurous leader who set the example, the wit or sprightliness of the speaker might have been lost to the intelligent audience.

It is not long since that we—that is to say, the present writer and his friend—read a book of many pages, and having come to the end, pronounced it emphatically and unhesitatingly "a stupid thing." Who could have written it? We turned to the title-page, and, lo! it proved to be the work of a favourite and popular writer. It was amusing then to feel how irresistibly we veered round, and how sagely we found out that there was "something in it" after all. And when, soon afterwards, a review of the same work came before us, lauding it to the skies, we wondered what spirit of dulness

had come over us that we did not at once perceive its beauties. So much for following the leader.

To do as others do, and to think as others think, seems to be the rule: to think and to act for one's self seems to be the exception. Best so, perhaps, on the whole, and in matters of small moment. And yet there is a danger—a danger of laziness. To think requires an effort, and when we can get another to think for us it saves trouble. A danger of cowardice. To be *singular* in thought or action, exposes to ridicule. We don't like ridicule; we are afraid of it. A danger of folly. Folly has its leaders, and they have their imitators—shoals of them.

It is *not* well when we follow even a multitude to do evil. It is not well for a youth to begin to break the sabbath, to treat the Bible with neglect, and his parents with contempt—to walk in the counsel of the ungodly, and stand in the way of sinners, and sit in the seat of the scornful—because others do these things. It is not well for a man to waste his time, ruin his character and prospects, sap the foundation of his health, and consequently shorten his life, and eventually lose his own soul, because others do so. But it is well to “be followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises”—well, to walk in His footsteps, whose life is our best example, whether we walk there alone or in company.

It is well, too, to cultivate and encourage in ourselves a certain independence of mind which, while it will keep us from being singular for singularity's sake, will take us, in little things as well as in matters of higher moment, and once for all, out of the catalogue of servile imitators. Seeing, however, that there are so many imitators in the world, and that every person, while a follower of some, is also a leader of others, it is well to “walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.”

#### THE MOTTO OF THE SUN-DIAL.

THERE are probably still many persons who, although belonging to a past generation, still linger among us, and may happen to remember the sun-dial which some time since stood upon the Middle Temple, and whose singular motto was accustomed to give such peremptory advice to those who looked up into its face for information respecting the flight of time. The building of which it was so useful an adjunct and ornament has been now for years razed to the ground, and with it has perished the useful monitor in question. To those who have never seen it, or heard the curious history of its origin, the account may not be unacceptable.

We no longer require sun-dials to mark the hour. In these days of improvement, there is scarcely a street in the great metropolis that does not afford the public the means of ascertaining the progress of time; while by night as well as by day the towers of our churches supply us with ample opportunities of measuring the advance and departure of that possession which is bestowed upon all, but which so few know how to use as they ought. But at the period to which we are referring, illuminated clocks were unknown; and if one of these trans-

parent time-keepers had suddenly shone forth upon the darkness of our forefathers, the fabled Cyclops himself, that “monstrum, horrendum ingens,” could not have produced more amazement with his immense solitary orb of vision. Clocks of any kind were then rarely seen in public, and the people generally were content to learn the hour of the day from the face of a sun-dial, when and where it was possible for them to do so. Great was the boon, therefore, conferred by any individual or public body who undertook to place one of these instruments of horology where it could be easily approached, and loud were the encomiums passed upon the Honourable Society of Benchers, when, in their generosity, they determined to erect one, and that too of an horizontal form, upon the walls of the Middle Temple, where it appeared to be particularly required.

The order was given to the most celebrated manufacturer to prepare one worthy the Society and the place. In due course the instrument was constructed, and all was ready for its public exposure, with the exception of *that* without which no sun-dial would be considered complete, namely, a suitable and appropriate motto. In order to be furnished with this, the manufacturer was desired to wait upon the benchers at the Temple, on an appointed day and hour. It so happened that, being unable to attend in person, he sent his foreman, a plain, matter-of-fact man of business. When he came, according to instructions, he was surprised to find that the benchers had separated without at all recollecting either the appointment or the motto. He found there only one learned member, who appeared to know little and care less about the entire affair, and who had manifestly been annoyed about something or other just at the moment when the man was ushered into his august presence. The foreman was very abruptly asked what he wanted.

“Please, sir,” said the man, a little confused at the mode in which he was addressed, “my master sent me for the motto.”

“Motto, motto—what motto? I know nothing of a motto,” said the bencher.

“The motto for the sun-dial, please, sir,” said the man, “which your honours promised to have ready.”

“I told you,” said the honourable bencher, “I know nothing about any motto, or sun-dial either. You should have been here much sooner. I cannot be delayed by you any longer. *Begone about your business.*”

The man, abashed, at once withdrew, and returned to his master, who was anxiously waiting for the promised inscription.

“Well, John,” said he, “have you seen the gentlemen?”

“Yes, sir,” said John; “I saw one very queer gentleman, who appeared to be in a great hurry to get away.”

“And what did he tell you?” said the master. “Sir,” said John, “he first said he knew nothing about any motto, and then in a loud voice told me, ‘*Begone about your business;*’ so I hurried home as quickly as I could.”

“Oh! very well,” said the master, who was a little of a wag: “that will do famously.” And on the next day the walls of the Middle Temple



were adorned with a first-rate sun-dial, on which stood out, in large and attractive letters, the sage and appropriate motto—

"BEGONE ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS."

A capital motto it was too! God has given every man his work, and the time to do it in; and happy are those who can always make the hour and its duty go hand in hand.

### CURIOUS PETRIFICATIONS.

THE seashore on the coast of Syria is almost entirely void of attraction for such as love the study of conchology; but few specimens of shells are to be obtained, and these few are small, uninteresting, and imperfect, being almost invariably broken from the force with which they are dashed by the waves against the shingly beach of these parts. This is more particularly the case with Alexandretta, where the only things ever washed up to gratify curiosity, with one single exception, may be said to be huge logs of wood, decayed branches of trees, and an occasional old shoe, thrown overboard by some reckless mariner, on whose huge foot it had seen good service. One solitary exception, however, there is to this state of things, which is quite a treasure-trove to curiosity-hunters; though, singularly enough, it is only to be procured at a certain season, while sometimes a period of two or three years will intervene between the times of its emergence from its dark ocean-home.

It was in the month of August, 1844, that, whilst taking our customary evening stroll along the beach at Alexandretta, our attention was first attracted by the appearance of numerous little stones, which, from their bright polish, had evidently been freshly washed up by the sea, and out of which grew innumerable little flowers, almost all of an uniform height and size, and consisting simply of the stem, about an inch and a half in height, and the flower, in shape and size resembling the wild forget-me-not. There were no leaves, neither were any signs to be seen of little fibrous branches. We gathered as many of these as we could conveniently carry; and, strange to say, though the flowers were of very fragile texture, scarcely one out of the many specimens we collected had been at all injured, or was in any respect imperfect. On examining these submarine plants the following day, we found the matter on which the flowers had sprung up to consist of fragments of shells, pebbles, sand, gravel, and what had every appearance of having been small twigs of thorns and other bushes; the whole of which, however, had in process of time become cemented together, or, rather, the various substances had run into one another, and every particle of it, the flowers and their stems included, was in a most perfect state of petrification. On breaking some of the stones with a hammer, the whole interior displayed the same variety of amalgamated substances as the exterior, being covered with veins that indicated not only the form, but the marks, and even the colour, of the various particles of this petrifigineous composition; while in some instances, a small fibrous way was left to indicate where the roots of the little plants had pene-

trated, probably in their pristine state of vegetation. The flower and the stem were like alabaster, and were easily reduced to the finest powder. A minute inspection of the flower, and the exact similitude it bore, in all respects except colour, to the common wild forget-me-not, has often led me into vague and unsatisfactory speculations on the hidden productions of the fathomless ocean, during which I have wondered whether the bottom of the sea produces as great a variety of weeds and plants as the wide earth we live upon!

Many of these petrified flowers we kept for years under a glass-case. In August, 1845, (the year following our first discovery of these submarine flowers,) we searched in vain for them; they came not; but in August, 1846, they were as plentiful as before, after which they were seen no more till late in the same month of 1849.

THE BEST MAINSPRING.—Love to Christ is a motive equal to all emergencies. There is a ruling passion in every man's mind, and when every thing else has lost its power, this ruling passion retains its influence. When they were probing among the shattered ribs for the fatal bullet, the French veteran exclaimed: "A little deeper, and you will find the emperor." The deepest affection in a believing soul is the love of its Saviour. Deeper than the love of home or kindred, deeper than the love of rest and recreation, deeper than the love of life, is the love of Jesus. And so when other spells have lost their magic, when no name of old endearment, no voice of on-waiting tenderness can disperse the lethargy of dissolution, the name that is above every name, pronounced by one who knows it, will kindle its lost animation in the eye of death. There is a love to Jesus which refuses to let a much-loved Saviour go, even when the palsied arm of affection is no longer conscious of the benignant form it embraces. Love to Jesus is religion. Love to Jesus is essential and vital Christianity.—*Life in Earnest.*

A BILLION.—Few people have any conception of the stupendous sum which is designated by this term. Some writer having stated, in an article headed "What becomes of all the Pins?" that millions of billions of pins must vanish, nobody can tell how, or where, in the course of a year, "Euclid," a correspondent of the "National Intelligencer," shows up the absurdity of the assertion in the following style: "I think, sirs, the author of that article thought little of what he was saying, when he said that millions of billions must vanish in the course of a year. Many pins, undoubtedly, vanish every year; but any mathematician will demonstrate to us that a single billion has never yet been manufactured. A billion, according to Noah Webster, is a 'million of millions'—a number so vast, I say, that the human mind has not the capacity to comprehend it. A manufactory making one hundred pins a minute, and kept in constant operation, would only make fifty-two millions five hundred and ninety-six thousand per annum, and would require nearly *twenty thousand years*, at the same ratio, without a single moment's cessation, to make that number called a billion."

### Varieties.

**CURIOUS MEMORIAL.**—In the old parish church of a small village not far from Swindon, North Wilts, is a tablet with the following inscription:—"To the memory of JOHN HARDING'S will, who died Sept. 20th, 1721. He gave by his will to the poor of this parish that have no collection out of the parish the sum of *ten shillings* a year, to be paid yearly at that time of the year he died, out of his ground called Pills, now in the possession of his widow, who duly pays the same, and after her death to be paid by the next taker of the ground, and so on to the world's end."

**TRAVELS OF A PRINTER'S HAND.**—A good printer will set 6000 ems a day, or about 12,000 letters. The distance travelled over by his hand will average one foot per letter, going to the boxes in which they are contained, and of course returning, making two feet every letter he sets. This would make a distance each day of 24,000 feet, or more than four miles, and in the course of a year, leaving out Sundays, that member travels about 1400 miles.

**A REVOLUTION IN PRINTING.**—The prospectus of a company formed for the purpose of bringing into operation in England some of the singular inventions of Beniowski, having reference to letterpress printing, has just been issued. It says:—"By the new mode of forming the types (to speak only of one of the most striking features), any man, woman, or child, who is acquainted with the common alphabet, will be enabled to become a useful and correct compositor, with only a few hours' previous instruction; and by other inventions contained in these patents, the mechanical toil and irksomeness of composing are greatly diminished, while the production is increased five-fold, so that this most important part of the printers' art may be made easy with regard to bodily toil, as well as simple with regard to mental preparation. A new field for employment may thus be opened to thousands of that sex and those classes to which society offers at present so few remunerative channels for the exercise of honest industry. A revolution will also be established in printing, analogous to that effected in weaving by the application of the power-loom, enabling men, women, and children, with but little previous instruction, to become skilful compositors."

**MINIATURE OAKS.**—If an acorn be suspended by a piece of cord within half an inch of the surface of some water contained in a glass, and permitted so to remain without disturbance for a few months, it will burst, send a root into the water, and shoot upward a straight tapering stem with beautiful little green leaves. In this way a young oak-tree may be produced on the mantelsheaf of a room, and become an interesting object. The chestnut will also grow thus, and probably other nut-bearing trees. The water should be often changed when the plant has appeared.

**ASBESTUS** is a fibrous, mineral substance, which will burn, but cannot be consumed. It is frequently used in the present day in stoves, by which the consumption of fuel is avoided. Pliny, who lived 1800 years ago, said he had seen napkins made of cloth manufactured from asbestus; and that when taken from the table after a feast, they were thrown into the fire, by which means they were rendered cleaner than if they had been washed in water. The principal use of asbestus cloth was for the shrouds used at royal funerals, to wrap up the corpse, that the human ashes might be preserved when the body was burned.

**HOW THE METROPOLITAN SMOKE NUISANCE MAY BE ABOLISHED.**—We are pleased to see that Messrs. Truman, Hanbury, and Co., have addressed a letter to the papers on this subject, in which they state that for the last five years they have adopted Jukes's apparatus—that it has fully answered their expectations—that it has saved them nearly 2000*l.* per annum, by enabling them to use small coal—and that the weavers in their neighbourhood (*Spitalfields*) are most thankful for their so doing, as they can make the most delicate-coloured silks without fear of tarnishing from a polluted atmosphere.

**"DUN."**—In the town of Lincoln, there was a famous bailiff (an officer appointed by the sheriff, who collects dues, arrests persons, etc.), whose name was *John Dun*. He was very active and successful in his business; and when a man refused to pay his debts, the creditors sent John Dun to collect for them. From this circumstance, and the fame of this officer, the word *Dun* came to be applied to the asking of a person to pay his debts.

**A PEOPLE WITHOUT A GOVERNMENT.**—It is stated that Labrador, with a population of 20,000 inhabitants, has neither governor, magistrate, constable, nor lawyer; yet violence and disorder are uncommon among them—a fact highly creditable to their morals. Their chief occupation is hunting and fishing, the produce of which is sold chiefly to the traders from the United States, from whom they receive the most of their supplies.

**ILLEGIBILITY OF WRITING.**—The following anecdotes will illustrate the misfortune of illegible writing, and hint at the importance of giving more attention to this subject, not only in regard to penmanship, but also in the construction of sentences. An English gentleman once applied to the East India Company to procure an office for a friend of his in India. Having succeeded in obtaining the appointment, his friend wrote him a letter of thanks, alluding to his intention of sending him an equivalent. The Englishman could make nothing of the word *equivalent* but *elephant*, and being pleased with the idea of receiving such a noble animal as a present from his friend, he was at the expense of erecting a large and expensive building for its accommodation. In a few weeks the equivalent came, which proved to be not quite so large as an elephant, for it was nothing more nor less than a pot of *sweetmeats*.—In a letter describing a school, the writer wished to say, "We have two school-rooms, one above the other, sufficiently large to accommodate three hundred scholars," but he actually said, "We have two school-rooms sufficiently large to accommodate three hundred scholars one above the other." What rooms! What a pile!

**LONGEVITY IN CANADA.**—The "Montreal Herald" mentions some singular instances of longevity brought to light by the late census. It says:—"We understand that more than twenty persons are returned whose ages exceed one hundred years. The most venerable patriarch of these, if we make no mistake, resides in the township of Grey, Simcoe county, aged 115 years. Ninety-five years ago he scaled the cliffs of Quebec with General Wolf, so that his residence in Canada is coincident with British rule in the province. He has attached himself to the Indians, and lives in all respects like them. This veteran is named Abraham Miller. Gallantry will not permit us to omit honourable mention of an almost equally distinguished person of the other sex. Helen Maguire is one hundred and six years of age. She still dresses without help, and walks out for air and exercise whenever the weather is sufficiently fine to tempt her from the chimney corner. She still has all her faculties, and can thread a needle without spectacles."

**THE MISSISSIPPI.**—A river that runs east or west crosses no parallels of latitude; consequently, as it flows toward the sea, it does not change its climate. The crops that are cultivated at its mouth are grown also at its sources, and from one end of it to the other there is no variety of productions; it is all wheat and corn, or wine, or oil, or some other staple. Assorted cargoes, therefore, cannot be made up from the products which such a river brings down to market. On the other hand, a river that runs north or south crosses parallels of latitude, changing its climate at every turn; and as the traveller descends it, he sees every day new agricultural staples abounding. Such a river bears down to the sea a variety of productions, some of which the different nations of the earth are sure to want, and for which each one will send to the market at its mouth, or the port whence they are distributed over the world. The assortments of merchandise afforded by such a river are the life of commerce. They give it energy, activity, and scope. Such a river is the Mississippi, and the Mississippi is the only such river in the world.